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HOW TO TEACH VERTICAL WRITING

A MANUAL
DESIGNED TO ACCOMPANY THE

VERTICAL ROUND-HAND WRITING BOOKS

BY

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BOSTON, U.S.A.
GINN & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS

The Athenæum Press

1898
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HOW TO TEACH VERTICAL WRITING.



THE VERTICAL ROUND-HAND SERIES.

THE object of this manual is to afford teachers, in as concise form as possible, information and suggestions that shall enable them to get the best results from their pupils in vertical writing.

The first requirement in a teacher of writing is a proper conception of the importance of good penmanship. Should the teacher reflect that only a small proportion of his pupils can look for preferment through wealth or influence, while the greater part must rely wholly on their own ability to secure business positions; that, moreover, ability is frequently of no avail without the accompaniment of a neat, legible handwriting, then the teacher who did not insist upon his pupils acquiring such a hand would feel himself indeed blameworthy.

The advantages claimed for vertical writing over slant writing may be stated and arranged as follows :

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| I. LEGIBILITY | { | 1. Simpler forms. |
| | { | 2. Shorter letters. |
| | { | 3. Wider spaces. |
| II. RAPIDITY | { | 1. Less distance traversed. |
| | { | 2. Greater freedom of movement. |

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| III. ECONOMY | { | 1. Space and time saved by omitting
superfluous strokes.
2. More words on a line.
3. More lines on a page. |
| IV. BEAUTY | { | 1. Greater uniformity.
2. Greater simplicity. |
| V. HYGIENE | { | 1. Position more healthful.
2. Strain on the eyes spared. |

LEGIBILITY.

Whatever doubt there may be concerning some of these claims, there can be none about the increase in legibility, which is apparent from the start. The reasons are clearly seen. The eye takes in a simple form with less effort than a more elaborate or complex one. The straightening up of the main lines makes letters appear farther apart, hence clearer and more distinct. Indeed, the main strokes *are* farther apart than in slant writing, if the distance between them is measured at right angles. Further, in the Vertical Round-Hand Writing Books, the turns at the top and bottom of the small letters are broadened, which makes the writing more round and, accordingly, more legible. Another element of legibility is the system by which the capitals and loop letters are just twice the height of the smaller ones.

RAPIDITY.

It will be admitted by every one that the last-mentioned feature conduces to rapidity as well, for it enables the learner to write with due regard to proportion with much less difficulty of measuring by the eye. We do not believe the forms need to be exactly like print, but as nearly as

possible like print, while still capable of being rapidly and easily executed. Now, in printed Roman text, the capital and extended letters are only one-fourth higher than the short letters, while there is yet no difficulty in reading easily and swiftly. In script, however, since it is necessary to make the extended letters with a loop, an increase of height is thereby involved. A glance will convince any one that loops and capitals twice the height of the shorter letters are amply tall for clearness, while they are easier to execute, especially in hasty writing, than when extended more than this.

We have laid first and greatest stress on legibility because it is, in the demands of the business community, broadly speaking, the primary essential. But, while acknowledging and remembering this, we must not seek legibility at the cost of other qualities nearly as important. We must not sit down satisfied with the attainment merely of a legible hand. To write legibly, without regard to the time employed, would be a serious mistake. The government, ordering a gunboat designed primarily to carry certain armament and to resist an enemy's fire, would not contract for any such boat without a stipulation as to a possible degree of speed. So in the construction of one's handwriting—one's main weapon in the business war—an element as sure to affect its availability as speed should not be ignored. The quality of ease should be regarded along with legibility.

BEAUTY.

Some of the advantages claimed above in behalf of vertical writing are too obvious to need explanation. Under the head of beauty, however, let us say a word. Uniformity, as has been suggested, is always pleasing to the eye. Simplicity, too, is generally admired and preferred to orna-

mentation, unless ornamentation makes an object more suited to the purpose of its creation. Useless decoration is not only expensive both in time and money, but is generally considered as a mark of bad taste. By recommending simplicity in writing, we do not plead for absence of beauty, but for a style free from useless, meaningless lines and flourishes, such as are sure to diminish clearness and offend the eye. Good proportion of letters, gracefulness of form, and ease of execution, are features that must strongly recommend the Vertical Round-Hand Books. Thus, while making utility the prime consideration, we have thought best to observe the demands of beauty when these did not interfere with our main purpose.

* * * * * "If needful things were all,
The earth might be without its beauty and yet produce its fruits,
And all the gorgeous hues and shades that deck the pleasant face
of things,
The scented flowers and many-colored tints, might be one level
blank."

GRADING.

To pass to the details of instruction: The teacher should see that the work is carefully graded. There can be little room for perplexity in this matter if the Vertical Round-Hand Writing Books are used. Each pupil should be provided at the outset with that number of the set best adapted to his need.

This series consists of four small and seven large books. The small books are designed for use on desks which may be rather narrow for larger books. They may be used in alternation with large books in school-terms of different lengths. As the grading is nearly the same in the corresponding books of the first four numbers, it will be found of advantage, where the small book does not afford sufficient

practice in writing, to follow it with the same number of the larger book, or *vice versa*.

As all written work ought to be done with care, it will be found helpful to use in connection with any of the numbers, in any grade, Ginn's Vertical Spelling Blank, which contains all the capital and small letters at the top of each page.

The greatest care has been taken to grade the books skillfully to meet the needs of the pupil in his progress from term to term. Attention has been given to gradation in the length of words, as well as to selection of words which may fitly enter and enrich the vocabularies of children. Words which allow a variety of combinations have been chosen, sentences formed which shall not only afford good copies, but be of interest in themselves. In his first book the child may need to concentrate his mind upon the forms of the letters to be reproduced, since they are new to him. As familiarity grows, the writing becomes more a physical and mechanical effort, and he may think as he writes. The German proverb says truly, "What goes into the mind through the eye never comes out again." In the series of writing books recommended, the earlier numbers contain many concise statements of interest, as well as sentences embodying simple scientific truths adapted to the ability of pupils to write or to comprehend. No. 5 contains sentences relating to American history, arranged mainly in chronological order, while Book No. 6 contains facts of English history, similarly arranged. The interest which these fifty statements may rouse in a class should prove a valuable help to the teacher in making the writing hour a success. Book No. 7 contains many important business forms and enough body writing to be serviceable training for record keeping.

POSITION.

The teacher must understand the theory of correct position, and should insist on such position being maintained by the class. A thorough drill in this matter is necessary with all of the classes until every child understands how



No. 1.

to take the proper position at a given word. General directions before the class, no matter how clearly given, will not reach every pupil. Individual instruction and assistance on the part of the teacher are necessary to make certain that all understand what is required.

Pupil. — The pupil sits directly facing the desk, with both arms supported by it, the feet squarely on the floor, the body straight but inclined slightly forward. The hand and forearm are in a straight line.¹

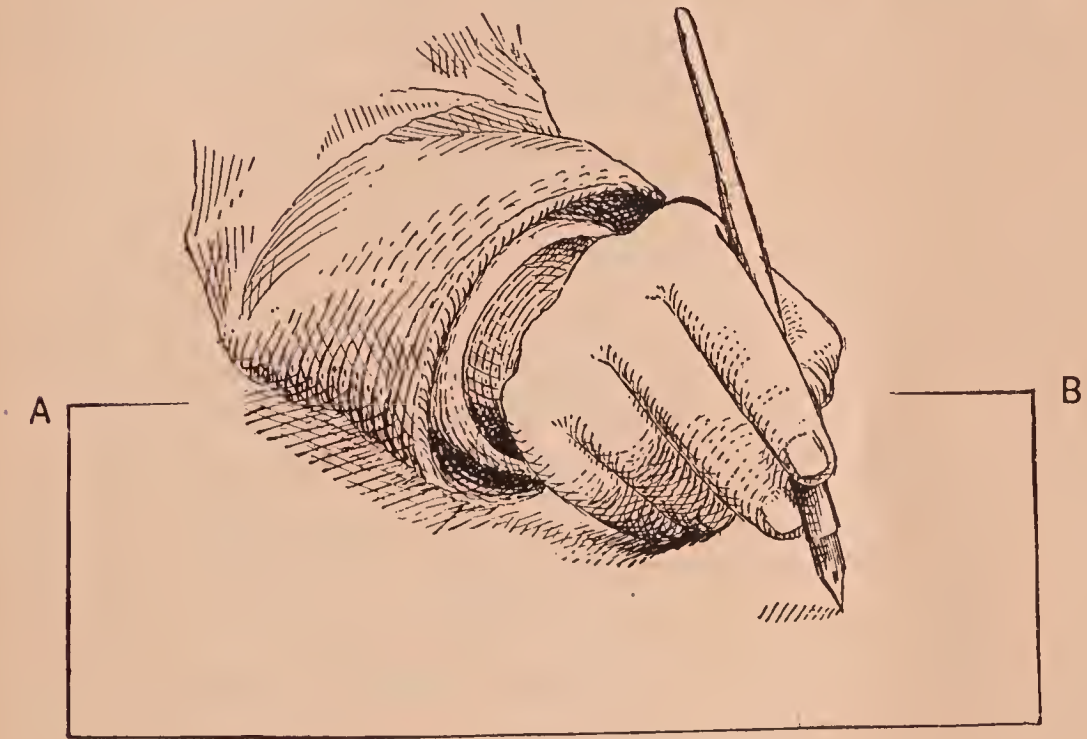
Book. — The lower edge of the book is parallel with the front of the desk. It is placed well up on the desk, so that the arms may be supported; and as successive lines are written the book is moved up rather than the arms down.

Pen. — The pen is held lightly between the thumb and the first and second fingers, the end of the first finger being

¹ See cut No. 3, page 38.

about an inch and a half from the point of the pen. The third and fourth fingers are slightly bent under the hand, forming a support for it, and, at the same time, raising the wrist from the desk. Both points of the pen bear equally upon the paper, and the penholder points in the general direction of the forearm.

This will make it necessary to turn the pen in the hand a little toward the left, to secure a clear, strong line.



No. 2.

The *elbow* of the *right arm* should not be placed on the desk. The line A B is to show direction of front edge of desk, so that one may see about what angle the forearm should make with it. The *left elbow* should rest at or near lower left corner of the desk.

As a help to getting an erect position and freedom of movement, the following exercise may be practiced. Let the pupils take a pad or a large book like a geography, place a few sheets of paper on the book, and, sitting upright, hold the book in the lap, its upper edge resting against the desk so as to form an angle of about twenty degrees. Then

let each one take a pencil and write on the paper some simple words. Here the arm should not rest on the book, but should move as a whole throughout the writing of each word, sliding on the nails of the two little fingers. One or two trials will show that, if the paper is held so that the top edge is parallel to the front edge of the desk, writing vertically is not difficult. It will also convince one that it is not necessary to lean forward very much in order to see the work clearly enough to write well. Of course it must be understood that *this is not the position we advocate for the usual writing lesson.*

In the above cut, No. 2, the hand is seen from the front, and is held well up, resting on the nails. It will not matter, after a little, if the action of the fingers comes into play in conjunction with the arm, but not enough to form a rest on the right side of the hand if one would write easily and rapidly. Mere finger movement is slow and painful if the writing is long continued. Bookkeepers, and all others who are obliged to write continuously for hours, must of necessity write with freedom of movement. To give a class the right conception of a proper movement by which vertical writing may be done easily and rapidly, begin a lesson somewhat after the following manner, especially with pupils of ten or more years of age.

Request the pupils as a class to stand directly in front of the desk, if the chair will allow, otherwise at the left, but near to the chair, so that the right hand may touch the desk nearly in front of the body. Let them each take the pen in the hand, as described for pen holding, only with the end of the holder pointing down, so that they may trace a word on the desk without scratching it. Allowing the penholder to touch and the hand to rest on the nails of the third and fourth fingers (no part of the arm touching the desk), ask them to trace any simple word, as, for instance, *nine*,

making the traced letters about an inch or so in height. Let them do it with a fair degree of speed, that is, as fast as it can be done consistently with good forms of letters. Do this three or four times, and ask them to observe whether the center of motion is at the wrist, at the elbow, or at the shoulder. They will tell you the shoulder is the center, as it unquestionably is. Having drawn out this answer, have the word traced again, and perhaps two or three other similar words, so that there may be no question as to the point being understood. Now allow them to sit, and ask them to trace the same words and see if they can use the same movement. In doing this they will naturally raise the arm free from the desk, resting only on the nails, which of course will move across the page as the word is traced. Let them do this several times, each time reducing the size, finally bringing it down to nearly normal size. If now they say the desk is too high, that it seems to elevate the shoulder, which it will undoubtedly do with many of the smaller pupils at least, ask them to let the arm rest partially on the desk, but still to move the hand forward a little with each word traced — rather than to allow the hand to drop over to the right and become stationary, so that the result will be wholly a wrist action. Some have advocated allowing the hand to turn and rest on the side just forward of the wrist, and to this there would be no objection, if by so doing the hand did not become fixed in position. The tendency, however, is to make such a rest stationary, and so we think it better to let the nails of the third and fourth fingers form a movable rest.

Now, in order to secure correct form with a proper movement, let the class turn to the third cover page of the writing book, where a few exercises are given for just this purpose.

The first movement exercise is the small *i*, written consecutively nine times. Request the children now to turn

the penholder so as to trace with the dry pen and trace the first exercise in the same way they have traced the imaginary words. There will be three points to be observed while tracing, as follows :

(1) To trace through the line without stopping the pen.

(2) To observe the full round turns at the bottom of each letter.

(3) To see that the downward strokes are vertical, which will not be difficult if the book is properly placed, as directed above.

Trace any of the other exercises in like manner.

These tracing exercises should be followed by practice of the same on loose paper with ink or pencil.

Of course these exercises are always in order, and five minutes devoted to this part of the work preceding each lesson for a few days will prove very helpful. Take, of course, the exercise which is best adapted to pave the way for the copy to follow ; as, for the capitals, the exercises which are nearest to the form of letter in the copy.

Some of the points to which special attention should be given may be mentioned here.

To pupils who have had but little practice in vertical writing, as well as to those to whom it is entirely new, one of the difficulties sure to be met with will be in the round broad turns at top and bottom of the small letters, especially in letters like *a*, *d*, *g*, or *q*. The *m* and *n* also, as well as similar parts in *h* and *y*, will need attention. The third exercise on the third page of the cover will be found helpful for the latter, but for the first letters mentioned let the class try the exercise referred to on page 25, under directions for small *a*.

Speed lessons should be given frequently. Dictate a full line sentence, and require it to be written carefully on paper by every pupil two or three times. Then ask all to write

the same sentence till you call "time." See how many lines can be written in two minutes, and done fairly well. This continued regularly will give very satisfactory results.

USE OF BLACKBOARD.

The blackboard is indispensable in teaching writing, and should be constantly employed. At the beginning of each lesson a few words in explanation of the copy to be written, illustrated by diagrams, will not only secure at once the attention of the class, but will help to fix it on the single point under consideration. This leads to an important principle carried out in the books. Some one feature is to be made prominent at each lesson. Since the letters, both small and capital, are, in all the lower numbers of the series, taken up in regular order of development, it follows that there will be some new letter on each page on which the attention of every pupil should be focused. In the use of an entirely new letter, the *form* should be fully explained. In another case, there may be a new combination of a familiar letter with others. The modifications necessary in these various joinings require nice attention to make the letter distinct and to prevent confusion with letters of similar form.

Besides the consideration of new features, a necessary part of each lesson is the warning of pupils against faults likely to be committed by them; as, for instance, in the spacing between letters or parts of letters, in the height, or in the relative height of parts, to say nothing of fundamental errors in shape and size. Here the blackboard is of use for illustrating these common faults, letting the incorrect and the correct form stand side by side before the pupils' eyes. Interest is likely to be inspired if the children themselves are allowed to point out the errors and afterwards write the proper forms.

A good exercise for the board is this :

The teacher, having written a copy containing a number of similar letters, like the accompanying,

Be of good cheer.

may ask some pupil to draw a line through all the letters which should have the upper and lower loops uniform in width. It will be found that all of the extended loops should be of uniform height. By a few skillful questions, the teacher can soon bring out the fact that a uniform crossing point is an important help in securing evenness. It may further be shown that, even if the loops are of the proper height and equal in width, the correct formation will not result unless the downward strokes have a uniform curve.

Such are a few of the many devices by which, with the help of the blackboard, it is possible to keep a class interested, even enthusiastic, in the pursuit of good penmanship.

RULES FOR WRITING ON THE BLACKBOARD.

- I. Stand *facing* the blackboard.
- II. Step to the right continuously and do not reach the arm's length in that direction while writing. Always stand directly in front of the down stroke you are making.
- III. When putting a single line of script on the board as a copy, write on the level of the eye. By so doing you will not only get a better view of your letters, but it will help you to write straight without ruling a line to write upon.

- IV. Do not hold the crayon as you would a pen. Take the crayon between the first and second fingers and thumb, and let it point toward the palm of the hand, and not up beside the first finger, as you would a penholder.
- V. When writing on the board, do so with a *firm stroke*. This will give a strong, steady line if the crayon is used as instructed above.
- VI. Before writing the copy on the board, rule with a slate pencil a series of vertical lines which will be invisible to the class. These lines may be from four to six inches apart. As you write, make your down strokes parallel to these lines, thus securing vertical writing.

PERSONAL OVERSIGHT.

A thorough and unremitting supervision on the part of the teacher is absolutely essential in order to check careless methods and prevent them from growing into habits. In teaching penmanship an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. The teacher must be able to analyze and help pupils to analyze letters into parts and strokes. Knowing the peculiarities of all the letters, as well as the characteristics common to many, the teacher can point them out to the class, thus supplying general principles to fall back on in perplexity. Often the distinguishing feature of a letter lies in a turn or the size of an angle — as in *n* and *u* — and, as in the words *month* and *mouth*, this is the only means of deciding which letter it is. Care in such equivocal formations should be repeatedly urged. As a simple example of analysis, let us look for common traits in the letters *a* and *b*. We find none, and the prac-

tice of one would be no direct help toward making the other. Let us try *a* and *d*. They, as will readily be seen, have the first part alike, so that practice in making *a* is of immediate use in making *d*. It is as easy to see that small *i*, *u*, and *w*, are similar, one being a natural development of the other. The dullest pupil, after a multitude of such examples, can hardly fail to see that the most complicated letters are associations of simple forms, and this recognition will be an aid and spur.

UNIFORMITY.

Nothing has more to do with the pleasing appearance of a written page than uniformity. This includes uniformity of height, as well as of distance between letters and parts of letters. Ask the class if they have ever seen a large company of soldiers or of Knight Templars, or of any body of men all dressed alike, marching in regular order with uniform step. Ask whether such a body of one thousand men would not look better than another thousand men on their way to a fire, running pellmell, and dressed some in light coats, some in dark coats, others with no coats at all; some with tall hats, some with soft hats, and others bareheaded. Then inquire if the class has not seen pages of writing that looked as if the letters had just heard a fire alarm bell. A famous jingle, written as a postscript in apology, describes such penmanship:

“The *t*’s are not crossed, the *i*’s are not dotted,
Some words are expunged, and others are blotted,
And some are spelled wrong, or letters left out;
One scarcely can tell what I ’m writing about.
My capital letters are all on a spree:
Every *B* is an *R*, every *R* is a *B*;

The *P*'s and the *Q*'s are exactly alike,
The *M*'s, *N*'s, and *U*'s are out on a strike.
Some letters are large and some very small ;
The words hop about like straws in a squall.
I think, my dear sir, 't is no writing at all."

Time given to practice in uniform spacing and uniformity of execution will be time well spent.

MISCELLANEOUS SUGGESTIONS.

Before passing on to a more detailed study of the system of vertical writing, as set forth in the Vertical Round-Hand Writing Books, it may be well to conclude the hints to teachers by the following practical advice :

Urge constantly, though without "nagging," the importance of a good position. The position of the left arm has much to do with maintaining an erect posture. The elbow of the left arm ought to be kept on the desk and near its lower left corner.

See that the writing does not become "backhanded."

Do not allow the use of very fine pens nor of stubs.

Use good black ink that flows freely.

Write the copy yourself in advance, so as to be thoroughly familiar with its difficulties.

Criticise each pupil's work in passing, *and have the book frequently handed to you for inspection and comment.*

During the writing lesson do not attend to making out reports or other duties foreign to the lesson.

Do not expect pupils to write well without your unflinching interest and supervision ; in other words, do not let the book take the place of the teacher.

The methods of the writing book may well be applied to all the writing done in school.

Repetition of principles learned in the writing lesson, allusion to points there brought out, will be a valuable aid to the teacher in correcting the pupils' penmanship in other school work.

Turning to the Vertical Round-Hand Series, let us examine in detail the system of practice and study which it sets forth.

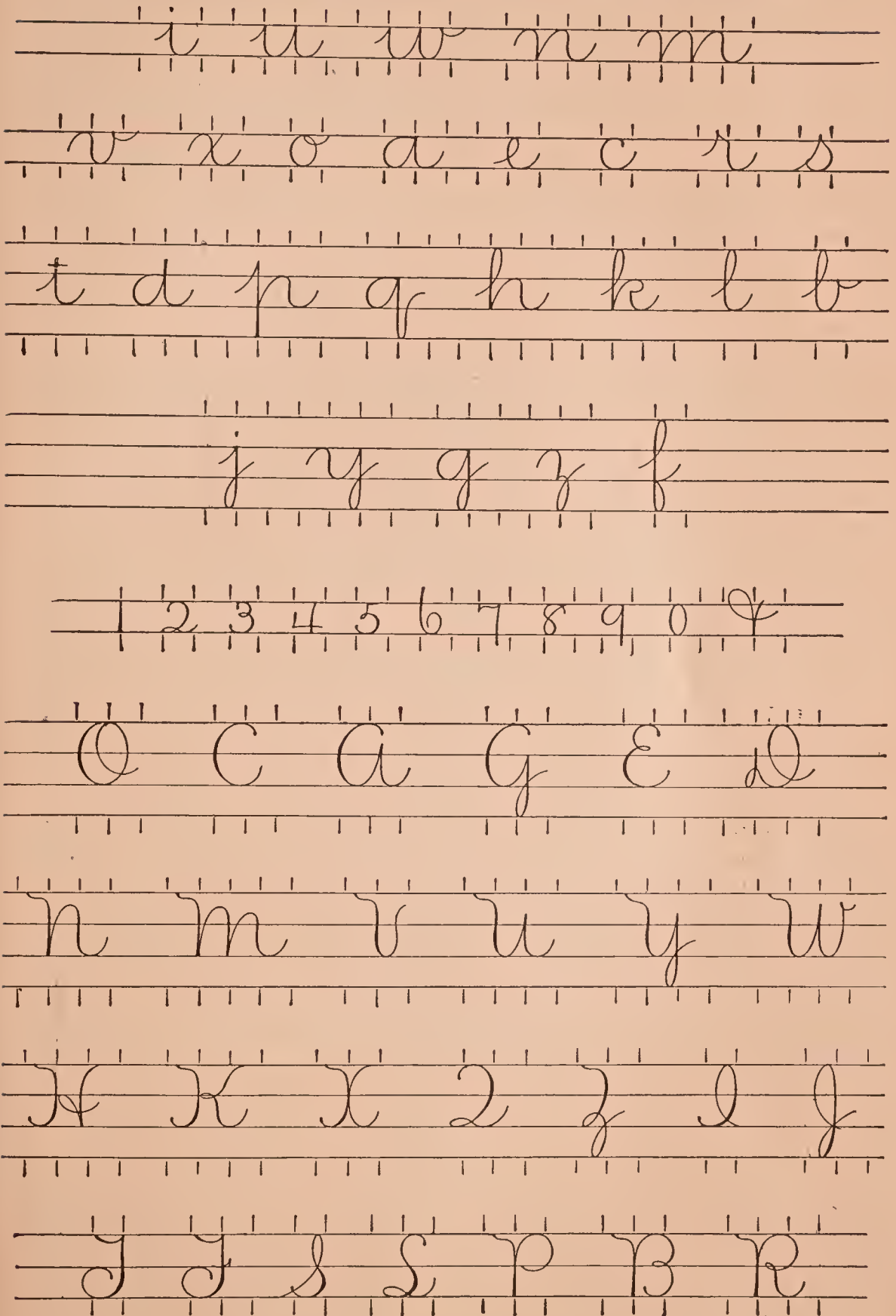
The chart on the opposite page serves to show not only the forms of the letters of this series, but also the arrangement of the letters according to similarity of formation. These points of similarity serve to fix individual forms in the minds of beginners, and they should be carefully pointed out and explained.

By reference to the chart it will be seen that the writing scale consists of four lines which give three spaces. The line on which the letters are written is called the base line (B); the next above it, to which all short letters extend, is called the head line (H); the second line above, to which all capital and loop letters extend, is called the top line (T). The line below the base line is called the lower line, or added line below (L).

T _____
H _____
B _____
L _____

The distance between the lines is called one space. It will be seen that all letters above the base line are either one or two spaces in height, except *r* and *s* of the group of short letters, which are about one-fourth of a space higher, and the *t*, *d*, and *p*, of the extended letters, which are one and a half spaces high. All the others are either one or two spaces in height. Pupils should be led to notice, however, that letters of two or more parts, like the small *h* or *p*,

VERTICAL ROUND - HAND WRITING.



may have one part one space high, while the other part may be one and a half or two spaces high. Through carelessness, these parts are not always made in their proper relation, and so the uniformity of the writing is destroyed and legibility suffers. All the letters, either capital or small, which extend below the base line, touch the lower line, and are thus one space below.

RULING OF THE BOOKS.

For beginners, where attention is necessarily divided between position, pen holding, form, height, etc., it has been thought best to provide some assistance in the use of scale lines as a help to securing uniformity in height of letters, thereby rendering it easier to space letters and words more uniformly. In connection with the writing book practice, from the very outset, it is well to do some work on plain ruled paper, so that pupils may the sooner be able to dispense with scale lines. These scale lines, in the first place, suggest to the child, while he is still untrained, to measure with the eye a reasonable standard of size. They further help toward uniformity, the importance of which has been more than once insisted upon, and by this means a child will unconsciously acquire the habit of neat, even penmanship. If left to himself to experiment, he will find it a harder and longer task to bring his handwriting into uniform size than if trained from the beginning by means of scale lines in his writing book.

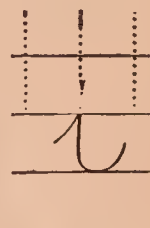
ANALYSIS OF SEPARATE LETTERS.

Referring to the chart on page 19, it will be observed that small *i* is the first letter given. This is because it is the simplest of all written forms, and a foundation letter, forming the basis of many of the small letters. This may

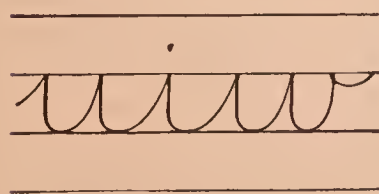
be illustrated by writing on the board such a letter as small *a*, and by its side small *i*. Erase the left part of the *a* and *i* will remain. Or write small *d*; then erase the left curve and the upper straight line, and again the remainder will be small *i*.

By reference to the chart it will be seen that small *i* is one space high and a little more than one space wide. It is used as a standard of measurement for the height of small letters. Grouped with it may be found the small *u* and *w* of similar formation. A characteristic of this group is the angular joining at the top of each letter. A valuable exercise to be used in connection with any of these three letters is the first one on the third page of the cover of all the writing books in this series.

The small *u* is one space high and a little more than two spaces in extreme width. While measurement is usually made at the head line, where there is least variation, yet we often, in speaking of the width of a letter, refer to the distance between the main downward strokes.

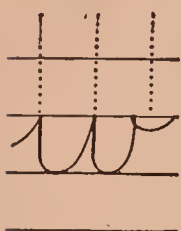


An exercise similar to that used for small *i* would be found beneficial, but it should be modified to make the distance between the letters a little greater than between the two parts, so that if six or eight were written without



raising the pen, each small *u* would be perfectly distinct, which would not be true if spacing between letters and parts of letters were the same. This is a point which needs careful attention from the very first. By reference to the copy here given the meaning will be clear. In the copy *u*, *i*, *w*, the distance between the parts of small *u* is one space

measured at the head line; but the distance between the *u* and *i*, or between the *i* and the *w* measured at the head line, is about one-fourth of one space greater, and this makes the whole legible, even if the dot over the *i* is omitted. Drill on this point till all get it firmly fixed in mind, and you will save yourself the need of a great amount of criticism hereafter. It will be well, also, to call special attention to the last part of the small *w*, and to show wherein it



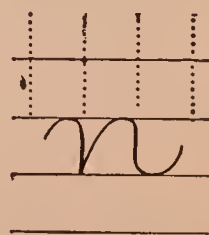
differs from the small *u*, and to practice with reference to emphasizing just that feature.

It will be good practice to write the *u* and *w* in alternation, joining several without stopping.

Pupils will do well to make a decisive dot in the *w* at the joining of the horizontal curve

which terminates the letter. The same feature will be found in small *v* and *b*, and attention to this in connection with the practice of *w* will prepare the way for an easy victory in these other letters.

In practice with the three letters already given, the *i*, *u*, and *w*, attention should also be given to making broad, uniform turns at the bottom of each letter and each part. So far as these turns are concerned, these letters may be considered as representative; for all other small letters, either one or two spaces high, which unite the right curve to the downward stroke should turn uniformly with these. There are at least sixteen small letters or parts of letters which have a turn at the bottom like the small *i*.

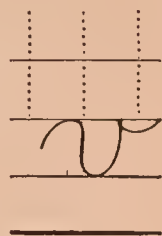


The second group of letters may include *m*, *n*, *v*, and *x*. These letters are all characterized by a broad turn at the top. The first part of each of these letters is a full left curve making a broad turn at the top, a turn precisely like the lower turn in the letters of the preceding group. The small *i* inverted would give the first

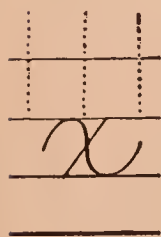
part of *n* or *m*. The distance between the main downward strokes in the *n* is one space, as in the *u*. The following exercise will be found useful for practice in connection with *n* or *m*.



No one can fail to note the similarity between the *v* and the *w*. Some pupils do not observe that the first part of *v* should be made like the *n* rather than like the *i*. It is a common fault in the practice of this letter by beginners, and sometimes by those more advanced, to make an angle at the top of the first part instead of a round turn. This is specially likely to happen when the letter is preceded by any letter which connects by means of a horizontal line, as from *o* to *v* in the word *move*. Also the joining of the *v*



to a small *e*, as in *save*, or similar words, causes no little trouble. An excellent practice in connection with this letter will be to write it in combination with the different vowels; as *va*, *ve*, *vi*, *vo*, each letter requiring a slight variation in the connecting line. At another time, practice may be given to combine it in a word with various letters preceding, which will necessitate modification; as in *carve*, *move*, *have*, etc. If pupils are encouraged to make a list



of such words, by way of silent work, and to weave them into sentences, additional training will be furnished. The judicious use of such exercises is the best means to impress these points upon the memory and to turn the mind to the variations in written forms. What a child finds

out for himself, on a suggestion from the teacher, will abide by him far longer than what is told him outright.

Small *x* consists of the last part of small *n*, slightly modified in slant, and crossed at the middle with a straight line.

This straight line slants enough to make the opening at the top and bottom about one-half space, measured at the head and base lines. The turns at the top and bottom should be alike.

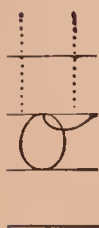
A good exercise to be used in connection with the letters of this group is here given; the main purpose is to get uniform spacing with equal turns at top and bottom.



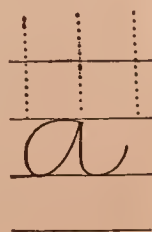
In such words as *my*, *hymn*, *pyro*, *nymph*, the value of the above exercise will be apparent.

The letters *o*, *a*, *e*, and *c* are included in the third group, having as a common characteristic a full curve for the downward stroke.

Small *o* begins at the top with a full round curve, uniting at the base line with another curve as full, which continues back to the head line, just closing the letter at the top, and finishing with a horizontal curve, which drops enough to form a small loop at the top. The width at the middle height is about three-fourths of one space. It will be found good practice to make a series of small *o*'s joined without raising the pen, giving attention to making the letters full and round and all of equal width.



The small *a* is begun at the top with a very full curve, slanting back one space and downward to the line, where it unites to a part like small *i*, the first upward stroke of which touches the head line at the beginning point in order to close the letter at the top. As a help in making this letter of proper width with all parts turned alike at the base line, let the



pupils make small *u*, and then change to the *a* by adding the curve from the top of second part to base of first part. It will be found a good plan to make several small *u*'s joined, and then, perhaps, change every other one to *a*. This will help to impress the fact that the connecting line between *a* and preceding letters in a word is one space longer than usual. The same would be true of *d*, *g*, or *q*.

Saratoga Acadia.

Words like the two here given in script will illustrate the point. This will also show that *a* and *u* are equal in width, a point which will frequently need to be made prominent in all classes. This exercise will be found of value in connection with practice on the *a*.

aaaaaa

It must not be forgotten that all these exercises are intended for a double purpose, *viz.*, to teach form and to assist in acquiring freedom of movement.

Book No. 1 of the small size in the Vertical Round-Hand Series gives all the scale lines and all the space marks to indicate width, as shown in the few letters here explained. By careful study of this book, in connection with the chart found on the covers of every number of the set, teachers will find all the assistance they will need to analyze properly every letter, capital or small, of the alphabet. There will be no difficulty in determining which of the movement exercises to adopt in connection with a given lesson. Directions to beginners should be plain and explicit, and, when possible, accompanied by some simple illustration on the blackboard.

For instruction in higher grades, another form of grouping in copies containing letters with common parts, every copy suggesting some feature for concentration of effort, will be found useful to keep up interest and to review points previously studied. In a copy, for instance, containing *a*, *d*, and *g*, or *q*, as

Dare to do right,

the teacher may underline small *a*, and then ask some pupil to go to the board and underline all other letters having a similar part. Another copy may include *b*, *v*, and *w*, and with this a like method of emphasizing kindred forms may be employed.

Again, words frequently occur in which such letters as *u*, *n*, *p*, *h*, *y*, *m* seem to predominate, as in the sentence: "Opium is produced from the poppy." Here a common fault is the failure to make the last half of the small *p* uniform in width with *n* or *h*, or even to make the second *p* like the first.

In every class there will be some children who write with little or no care, many who write hastily and thoughtlessly. To acquire habits of neatness, they should be led to think while they write, and to pay close attention to the "little foxes that ruin the vines," the details which seem trivial, but on which the final beauty or ugliness of a page depends.

"We think while we write, and write while we think.

If we think right, we write right, and there's no loss of ink.

By thinking and writing, perfection to gain,

Bad habits will leave us, and good ones remain."

CONCLUSION.

We would not have our readers suppose that a vertical hand is an immediate panacea for all the ills to which writing is heir. There is no royal road to good handwriting, and the sooner one is disabused of that notion the better. Some obstacles there are sure to be in the way of good handwriting, of whatever style, and to ascertain these and find means to overcome them is the part of wisdom. We have tried in this manual to indicate such a process, but we can at best serve only as a guideboard to point the way.

One thing is sure. Little progress will be made without careful instruction and painstaking by the teacher. More interest and enthusiasm in the work are necessary. The pupils should share this spirit, as they will if it is sincere.

Let the teacher have first a clear conception of how important the matter is; then a perfect comprehension of the methods and familiarity with details of practice; these, with sympathy, determination, patience, and enthusiasm, cannot fail to produce satisfactory results. A sufficient compensation for any sacrifice this may require lies in the certainty that many pupils will acquire the use of a powerful lever, by which, in after years, they may raise themselves to positions of honor and trust.

A FEW HINTS FOR CONDUCTING LESSONS.



Lesson 1.

The first lesson should of necessity deal largely with matters pertaining to position, penholding, position of book, etc., all of which have been explained in this manual under their proper headings.

Let us suppose we are before the class ready to begin the lesson. The books have been distributed, the pens are on the desks, every child is in an attitude of attention.

(1) Be careful to *hold* the attention. To this end the teacher must be fully ready to begin right and carry forward the work, step by step, without a break of any kind. If the teacher hesitates, as if she were uncertain how to proceed, the pupils will detect the fact at once. If she begins to explain a letter or copy and is obliged to stop and refer to it to find out just what it is, or to ascertain the proportions of any letter, she has half confessed herself unprepared, and to that extent has lost the confidence of the pupils in her ability to give sound instruction. The whole subject of the lesson should receive care at the teacher's hands before she comes to the class. She should sit down and write the copy several times before attempting to put it on the blackboard. For holding the attention of the class nothing will be found more serviceable than a judicious use of the blackboard. See page 13.

She may perhaps begin like this.

“How many of the boys and girls in this class would like to learn to write?” (All hands up.)

“How many of you would like to write well?”

“How many of you have seen good writing?”

“How many of you have seen bad writing?”

Teacher writes on the blackboard a word, as *man*, making the letters very uneven in height and size.

“Do you think this is good writing?” (An emphatic “No!”)

“Johnny, tell us why it is not good writing.” Johnny says, “Some letters are too big and some are too little.”

“Yes, the letters are not all the same size. How many think it would look better if all the parts of *m* and *n* were the same as the *a* in height?” (All agree.)

“Certainly, it would look better if so written. Let us write it so and see if it does not improve it.” Teacher writes it again, this time with uniformity in height of letters and their parts. (All agree that this looks much better.)

The teacher should make this one thing so prominent that for the time nothing else shall overshadow it. The object should be to concentrate attention on just one point, and make that so plain that there can be but one answer. Of course size and height are not interchangeable terms as a rule, but with beginners they may be so treated for a little while.

“Now let us look at our copy for a few minutes. The copy which we are to follow is found at the top of the page.” No matter what the letter may be, each child should be able to name it. This is the first thing. Next show the class just how to write it: where to begin, what kind of line, curved or straight, and just where to end. This is done by writing it on the blackboard, several times if necessary. It will be well also to show where they are likely to fail.

All this requires less time to do than to tell how to do it; yet it pays, for it not only helps a child to see, but it also shows him that his teacher is interested for him to know, and this is important.

Draw the scale lines on the blackboard and write a letter or word like the copy. Show the class that the scale lines are given to help them keep the letters of uniform size. Having made it plain, allow them to take the pen and try the copy. If pens are used for the first time, it will be necessary to show them how to dip the pen into the ink so as not to touch the bottom of the ink well and overload the pen, thus causing blotting and daubing the fingers.

Ask them to notice the little hole in the pen near the point, and request them to dip the pen just far enough into the ink to cover the little hole. It will then give them sufficient ink to write, but not enough to drop from the point. A new pen may be moistened on a sponge, or held in the mouth an instant, but children should be told that the pen must never be put into the mouth after once having been inked. All should, therefore, have a penwiper; and two or three pieces of old silk stitched together will make a better penwiper than either a piece of chamois or woolen cloth.

Proceed slowly at first, letter by letter, or word by word, at the call of the teacher. *At first* it may be better to write by columns. As this proceeds, let the teacher pass among the pupils to assist and encourage. Some will fail to understand just what is required, others may hold the pen upside down, while others will hesitate, fearing they may go wrong. There will be enough to do to keep a class together to engage all the teacher's time. Do but little at each lesson, but give one at least each morning.

Lesson 2.

“Attention! Position! Open books!”

“Let us look at what we wrote yesterday.”

“Henry, what was the copy yesterday?”

“Richard, what is the copy to-day?”

“Can any one see in the copy for to-day anything that looks like that of yesterday?”

Let us suppose the copy was small *i* for yesterday, and small *u* or *w* for to-day; or small *a* yesterday and small *d* to-day. Bring out from the children, by skillful questioning, the points of similarity in the forms of the letters.

“Look at the page you wrote yesterday and see if you can find any place where it does not look like the copy.”
(Hands up.)

Let a few explain the mistakes observed. Probably they will say, first of all, that they failed to make the letters of the same size; at any rate touch upon that point by way of review and to clinch it.

Now write on the board any word of the copy, making the lines much too heavy. Ask if any pupil put too much ink on the other page. Write another word, or the same one again, this time making all the up strokes weak and the down strokes very strong, and again the third time write it correctly, and call attention to the difference in appearance. After explaining the copy and asking specially that all the letters be made of uniform height, let them take the pens and try again, this time trying also to make all the lines of uniform strength. Of course this phrase “uniform strength” can be made plain to them by illustration. As you go about the room, some books will be found written with good quality of lines; hold up such a book for the class to inspect, and encourage others to do similar work.

Usually one new feature taken up at each lesson, with the old in review, or sometimes simply the review presented in a new way, will be all that is needful. The chief point is to keep up the interest, and this can be done in many ways, which will suggest themselves to a teacher. No teacher can expect first-class results if pupils are left to their own resources. It is well to remember also that it is much easier to keep the interest, than to regain it when it is once lost. If a child has written a page or two which is far below his own standard of excellence, because of lack of interest, it will be hard for him to recover interest, knowing that his book is already half spoiled. If habits of neatness and care are formed, they will affect not only his copy book, but much of everything else which he does in life. Appeal to the observation of children and you will find the majority of them have already noticed the difference between tidy and untidy dress, attention or lack of attention in personal appearance, so far as the care of the hands, finger nails, or hair is concerned. Ask them if they like to see a garden which is full of beautiful flowers better than one full of weeds. Tell them a careless boy is quite likely to grow into a careless man, and that they must form habits and ways of doing things which they like to see in others.

Lesson 3.

Young children will hail with delight the time for the writing lesson, if it is conducted in a manner to keep them interested.

They like to use their hands as well as their brains.

Occasionally proceed somewhat as follows :

“How many of you boys and girls ever tried to write a letter?”

Johnny says, “I tried to print one once when my papa was away from home.”

Nellie says, "I wrote one to Santa Claus and told him what I wanted him to put into my stocking."

Willie says, "Santa Claus gave me a nice box of paper and envelopes, and I am going to write some letters," etc., etc.

"I think it will be well for all of you to write me a letter some day and tell me in what street you live, the name of the city in which you live, when your birthday is, and what you did during vacation. How many would like to do that?"

"Well, then, we must learn to write well; we must learn how to spell correctly, and to do neat and careful work in everything. A letter with blots and finger marks all over it would not look well." Here the teacher may hold up a couple of letters, written on children's paper, prepared beforehand; or, better still, letters that children have written, one neat, clean, nicely folded to fit the envelope, and carefully addressed; the other crumpled, blotted, badly folded, and creased. It will be a good lesson on neatness, which will help for days to come in all writing lessons, either in or out of the writing book. And it may be well to say here that it should be the aim of the teacher to see that all written work is carefully and neatly done. Habits are being formed now which will strengthen with age; let them be habits of careful attention to little details in neatness, arrangement, and execution.

The influence which a teacher exerts unconsciously in this direction is of grave importance. Therefore, if you are not careful in what you place before the children on the blackboard, or in written work of any kind, it will be much harder to implant good habits in your pupils. Tell the children about the man who added the postscript to his letter, as described on page 16. They will appreciate it and it will keep them interested. The teacher may now

write on the board some word or words illustrative of words "which hop about like straws in a squall."

Write a word with some of the strokes vertical, some "backhand," some too much curved, and other curves too nearly straight. By the side of it write the same word again with all the strokes vertical. Showing faults by comparison is one of the most effective ways of teaching. Let them now proceed to write the copy, keeping in mind that the letters should be of uniform height, *i.e.*, touching the head and the base line, and of uniform strength, as well as uniform in direction of the downward lines.

These points may be illustrated in various ways, but do not fail to keep them clear, so that there shall be a definite aim. He who aims at nothing hits nothing. Have a mark, and try to hit the "bull's eye."

Lesson 4.

"Johnny, tell me how many desks there are in this room."

"Is your desk as near to Willie's as Willie's is to Nellie's?"

"Are all the desks in each row the same distance apart at the back of the room as at the front of the room?"

"What do we call the space between the rows of desks?"

"Is this aisle just as wide at the front as it is at the back of the room?"

"Suppose the carpenter had brought these desks in here and dropped them down anywhere, and fastened them down just where they fell; how do you think the room would look?"

"What did he do before he fastened them to the floor?"

"Do you think he improved the appearance of the room by placing them in rows and keeping them just the same

distance apart? Did you ever see an American flag? By what other name do we call it?"

"How many stripes are there on the flag?"

"Of what colors are the stripes?"

"How many are red?"

"How many are white?"

"Are all the red stripes and all the white stripes of the same width?"

"Suppose you should see a flag with some wide stripes and some narrow stripes; do you think it would look well?"

Teacher writes on the board, *Thirty-six desks* and *Thirteen stripes*, making very unequal "spacing," or distance, between the letters.

In all other features the writing should be as nearly normal as possible, so as to make the spacing all important.

By questioning bring out the faults. Show how difficult it is to read a page, if it is written with unequal spacing. This can be done by writing several words, leaving so little space between them that at first there appears to be but one long word.

Any illustration which will show this one feature will answer, and the teacher may think of others more suitable for her class.

Again, the teacher may write the words *Thirteen stripes* on the board six or eight times, each under the first, but with some of the lines very close and others wide apart.

It can easily be shown that if the lines are equally distant, the page will look much better than if written in a haphazard way.

Ask the children to look at the dark blue lines in the copy book, and they will tell you that they are equally distant from each other, and that the spaces between the lines are the same, just as in the flag.

People often write on unruled paper or on envelopes, which are never ruled. Proper distance between lines is necessary in order to make the page or envelope look well.

The distance between letters and parts of letters must be attended to, as the carpenter attended to placing the desks, or it will not be an easy matter to read what has been written.

Lesson 5.

“Who can tell us what we found out yesterday that will help us to make our writing look better?”

“Well, Sam, you may tell us.”

“We found that it ought to look *like the stars and stripes.*”

“Annie, tell us what you think.”

“I think we found that it ought to be *as wide as the aisles between the desks.*”

How's this? Does disappointment creep over the teacher's face, as a thundercloud shadows the summer landscape? Possibly, but we trust it does not portend a shower of harsh words. Just such things may happen. It is difficult to tell just what to expect. It should serve to show that “line upon line and precept upon precept” is necessary to lodge instruction in some soil. But, after all, it may not be so bad as it appears. The answers may be a failure to express just what is meant. One thing is certain: children will, as a rule, do the best they can, if wisely led. They will forget soon and fail often, but they are ever ready to try again; and, although the illustration has failed to reach some, it may have lodged with others, and may in one way accomplish what was intended, — it kept them interested. This is half the battle. Although the results

of one's best efforts may often prove as fruitless as the above would seem to indicate, yet the teacher should not become discouraged, nor give up, nor, above all, give way to scolding. Some one has said, "What is gained by harsh words is more than offset by ill-will." This is quite true. Try another way. Use your own methods, if they are better adapted to secure results aimed at. Only be sure you have an aim, and that you use the best powder. Then, fire away! No man ever yet brought down a whole flock at one firing. A few will need individual attention. Spot those and bang away again, but this time at closer range.

It will be observed from the foregoing that one lesson on a single topic will be insufficient. Take two or three, if necessary, but do not continue too long and wear it threadbare. It will be better to leave it and return again after a little interval, when by new illustrations it will seem fresh.

On nearly every page of a book there will be some new letter or combination of letters on which attention may be focused. Make this the central thought, with such instruction on other points, in review, as seems wise.

There will be some new form every day, and some general feature constantly, as spacing, size, direction, or uniformity in loops, etc.

Occasionally, the teacher will do well to write three or four lines on the board, one under the first, and so on; the first very carelessly, the second a little better, the third still better, and the fourth as nearly like the copy as possible.

Ask the children which they prefer. They will see that the lines were all written by the same person.

Ask them why the first is not good, and, as a rule, they will answer, "Because you did not try." Ask if the second line is good enough. They will answer "No."

Show them that it took but a trifle longer to write No. 4 than to write No. 1. Ask if they do not think it pays to give the extra time. They will see the point and give the answer you wish. Then apply it.

“The noblest undertakings man’s wisdom hath conceived,
By oft-repeated effort have been patiently achieved.”



No. 3.

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